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SUBJECT: EU-GDRC PRESIDENCY TENSIONS

Classified By: Classified by Ambassador Roger Meece. Reason 1.4 (b/d)

11. (C) The British, French, and Belgian Ambassadors informed the Ambassador October 24 that a European Union (EU) ministerial-level "Troika" delegation in Kinshasa two weeks ago had been unable to secure a meeting with President Kabila, to the general irritation of the Europeans. The three diplomats thought the German Foreign Minister had been particularly annoyed. In addition, they reported that EU Great Lakes Special Envoy Aldo Ajello had similarly been unsuccessful in securing a meeting with Kabila during his visit last week. Ajello intends to return to Kinshasa on October 30.

12. (C) The German Ambassador told the Ambassador on October 21 that he was leaving for Berlin for a few days, having been recalled for consultations. He said he did not want to leave Kinshasa, but had received instructions from Berlin. He did not specify the reasons behind Berlin's decision. He did say that he would be back in Kinshasa before scheduled October 29 elections.

13. (C) Comment: The German Ambassador's Berlin consultations may be prompted by the perceived slight to his Minister, by the ongoing debate in Germany about a possible extension to the mandate of the European Standby Force (EUFOR) as reportedly desired by Paris and others, or simply for a general discussion of the existing situation in Kinshasa. Possibly related, the German Ambassador on August 21 apparently sheltered Budget Minister and MLC Secretary General Muamba at his residence following clashes between Presidential Guard and MLC forces that day, likely creating ill-will at the Presidency. It is not clear that the Presidency is deliberately keeping the Europeans at arm's length, and scheduling with Kabila is always difficult at the disorganized Presidency. Kabila has been in Kinshasa throughout this period, however, and certainly among many of the European Ambassadors there is a feeling that recent relations with the Presidency have not been particularly good. Such deterioration serves neither the interests of President Kabila nor the Europeans generally, and hopefully whatever rough patch exists can be smoothed over as the GDRC moves through its critical final transition and election phase to a new government. End comment.  
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